

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

76th Year

16 DECEMBER 1977
3,951

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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 23 DECEMBER 1977 • No 3,952 • 25p



The art of the epigram
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The talented Mr Poe

By Patricia Highsmith

DAVID SINCLAIR:
Edgar Allan Poe
272pp. Dent. £6.95.

As David Sinclair says in the first paragraph of his admirably written biography, "Poe is pushing us towards the brink of a greater and still more terrifying awareness... towards the edge of that most profound human fear, the fear of self-revelation". To this end, Poe might be said to have sacrificed his life, or at least cut it short. It would have been so easy for him to have entered the dilettante literary set of his time, to have written sentimental Southern waddle, and to have lived in a fine house with a couple of servants. He also wrote himself out trying to raise the puffy weight of American letters to a higher and more honest level, thereby making enemies, of course, who in his last years contributed to his anxiety, derangement, and the beginning of a nervous breakdown; none, namely Rufus Griswold, Poe's first biographer, really had a go at him after he was dead. It is no wonder that his life was so short—1809 to 1849. Edgar Poe's tossings and turnings on his deathbed in Washington College Hospital, Baltimore, during the lost wretched days of his life, seem those of an almost tangible spirit trying to liberate itself from the body, and the reader of this account may be relieved when the end finally comes.

David Sinclair—a young journalist born in Northamptonshire—offers a theory about Poe's physical make-up: he may have been diabetic. Something at any rate was wrong with his metabolism. He was tense, nervous; so are a lot of people, but his sensibility became more acute through the years until "he glared visibly" at the sight and sound of his young wife Virginia, coexisting with consumption; she died two years before Poe did. It would be interesting to know for certain how much he really took in the way of food or drink, and Mr Sinclair's findings confirm what a few other unbiased biographers have said: that he was not so much a diabetic, as a timorously, if not a completely, over-sensitive to alcohol, to the form of his great, irrational speech and at times irrational behaviour, hints of delirium tremens even, would be characteristic of a diabetic. In fact, entrancing occasions were pretty few in Poe's lifetime.

Edgar Poe was born in Boston to Elizabeth Arnold Poe and David Poe Jr. both on the boards, Edgar was adopted at the age of three, and John Allan, a well-to-do merchant, and rechristened with Allan as his middle name. Edgar's mother by then had died. To be a player in these days was to be a gambler; and which John Allan did not let Edgar forget, and to make matters worse, Edgar's elder brother Henry died with alcoholic complications while he was still young. John Allan, a vigorous and ambitious man, had no children by his wife, but fathered several among mistresses. Edgar, well installed by the age of eight, must have assumed that he would inherit. The Allan ménage moved to England with a view to establishing a branch of the firm there, and Edgar attended school for three years, mostly at Stoke Newington. The business venture failed, and they returned to Richmond, Virginia. Edgar now had the advantage of Latin and some Greek, plus a grounding in English grammar, notably superior to what he would have received in Virginia. His American teachers took notice of his abilities and intellectual quickness.

At fourteen, Edgar fell in love with the mother of Rob Stoddard, one of his school friends; a thirty, a rare beauty, proud and statuesque, with large dark eyes, a fine straight nose, full sensuous lips, and a countenance which was pale, with the radiant and warm pallor of a tear-stained pearl. She was to be one of many women loved from a distance, the second, the fact, as he had already lost his sweetheart. Rob Stoddard wrote the poem called "To Helen" which contains the famous lines: "To the glory that was Greece And the grandeur that was Rome."

Though these lines were slightly reworked by Poe years later, bringing them into their present form, the rest of the poem remains the same, and is not bad for a fourteen-year-old. The now famous Poe rhythm is there, though the rhythm was common to that era—the happy choice of words was not so common.

John Allan's intentions towards his adopted son were certainly "good", but he would have preferred a son in his own mould. Edgar developed early a contempt for the businessman type, personified by John Allan. They were bound to clash. And it was Poe's nature to tempt fate, and his benefactors, to the utmost. It is a pity that he started to run up debts at the University of Virginia, both gambling debts and drinking debts; even more of a pity that he kept writing home, in later life writing to anybody, for bits of money.

The correspondence between John Allan and Edgar during the university period foreshadows scores of other letters that were to be exchanged between Edgar and editors, friends, even enemies. Poe always seemed to be able to swallow his pride when it came to asking for handouts. When he was still in his teens, John Allan realized that he intended to devote himself to literature, and in a serious way. The planer aristocrat appreciated art well enough, but they could not stand a professional artist. It was ungentlemanly, they thought, to apply professional standards to writing poetry. Edgar... was completely bewildered by this attitude, which would eventually cause him to turn his back on the South.

John Allan had paid off just recently to marry the unpaid ones conspicuous. He had run up a loss of nearly \$2,500 at the card table. Allan hauled him back to Richmond, and there Edgar learnt that his most recent passion, Elmira, Royster, had been sent out of town when her parents heard of Edgar's return, and Edgar was not admitted when he called at her home. According to Mr Sinclair, self-pity began to set in here, and that is a dangerous emotion.

Poe enlisted in the United States Army as Edgar Poe, confessed his true name after many months, did well, and was even promoted. He became acquainted with Sullivan's Island off South Carolina, later important in "The Gold Bug". Poe's appointment to West Point, gained only by sticky personal connections. Not so much gambling as "apparent delirium" neglect of duty got him sent down from the Point. By this time, John Allan had lost his patience, and Edgar had lost his patience, and he also had lost his legitimate son. It was 1831, Poe was twenty-two. He had published *Tamerlane and Other Poems* in 1827; *Al Arara* in 1829. Now there was *Poems*, Second Edition, in 1831. These efforts brought little notice and less money.

In 1831 he moved into the household of Mrs Clemm, sister of his mother, and mother of Virginia, later to become Poe's wife, who would have been nine, then; What a household! Mrs Clemm's son, called Henry like Edgar's brother, was a gambler, a drinker, and finally died. Virginia, a beauty, was already have been afflicted with consumption. Virginia was to be re-incarnated as Berenice and Elzoina in Poe's stories. There was of course no money. Mrs Clemm, whose degenerate grace was one of the eight pages of photographs in this book, has the face of an old and patient sheep that will never die, and indeed she outlived Virginia and Edgar, and once received a kind letter from Charles Dickens, who had met Poe in America and been well impressed by him. Dickens had been able to do nothing for Poe in England, though he tried. One can easily imagine Mrs Clemm tugging to market to buy left-over vegetables and whatever else may have been cheap to keep her family alive; there were sixteen more years for Virginia and eighteen for Poe. He married his first cousin when she was just short of fourteen in 1836.

The remaining years of Poe's life were semi-miserable and always

touch-and-go. Ten dollars a week was a typical salary for a "two hour a day" job that soon expanded into eight hours, with no extra money for the articles, reviews and even short stories that Poe might contribute; this was from Burton, editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Philadelphia, to which city the family of three had moved by 1837. "A Manuscript Found in a Bottle" had won the fabulous sum of \$100 years ago, but where was that money now? Drearily of all is to read Poe's exchange of letters with Lea and Blanchard, publishers of *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, whose attitude was that Poe ought to be glad to see his stories in hard cover. "Twenty copies for you to give away to friends" was his payment—no advance, no royalties, and he even failed to be able to "buy" his copyright from them. Meanwhile Virginia coughed. Poe tried to launch his own magazine, *The Penn Magazine*, then *Stylus*, and both projects came to naught. But many of his tales were published individually, and he made a final selection of over thirty, which in his words "would have made two thick volumes"—this idea was rejected by Lea and Blanchard. Among these stories would have been "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "Descent into the Maelstrom". This was 1841, a year of one disappointment after another.

Mr Sinclair's prose style is somehow reminiscent of Poe's era, and in the best sense: it is classical and clear, therefore forceful and easy to read. Poe's letters and those of his adversaries are quoted either entirely or at enough length to make them understandable and to show how both sides the occasional wavering or afterthought. It was an age of hot words.

Poe's last journey, from which he never returned, was to New York City, where he was to be buried. He was to be buried in the same place as his wife, Virginia, who had died in 1842. Poe's last journey, from which he never returned, was to New York City, where he was to be buried. He was to be buried in the same place as his wife, Virginia, who had died in 1842. Poe's last journey, from which he never returned, was to New York City, where he was to be buried. He was to be buried in the same place as his wife, Virginia, who had died in 1842.

Poetry's patroness

By Bernard Bergonzi

ELLEN WILLIAMS:
Harriet Monroe and the Poetry Renaissance
First Ten Years of Poetry 1912-1922.
312pp. University of Illinois Press: ALUPG. £6.75.

Harriet Monroe founded the magazine *Poetry* in 1912 as an affirmation of Chicago culture, like its university, in sympathy with poetry, its art gallery and library, and she managed to get extensive subsidies for it from the local business community. According to standard literary history, Miss Monroe had little idea of the kind of poetry she wanted to print until Ezra Pound imposed himself upon her, via transatlantic correspondence, and put her in touch with the new, arresting work that he and his friends were producing. As Ellen Williams' lively book, based on much unpublished material in the *Poetry* archives, the facts were less clear-cut. Harriet Monroe's tastes were eclectic, and she was ready to welcome, though



"Doctor Pagan operating"—an oil sketch, 1891, by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Pagan was one of the most celebrated surgeons of the day and Lautrec was taken by his cousin Tapie de Céleprun, a medical student, to watch the melodramatic public operations; Lautrec painted a second oil in the same year which gives a wider view of the operating theatre. From Toulouse-Lautrec by Richard Thomson (104pp and over 100 illustrations. Oresko Books. £8.95; paperback, £4.95).

mond, Elmira was unenthusiastic, though Poe chose to fancy them engaged, and so wrote Mrs Clemm to come to Richmond. At the same time Poe wanted, and expressed his wish, to be near one Annie, who lived in Lowell, Massachusetts. It is all a shambles, and in those last days Poe probably didn't know what town he was in. Annie he might finally have "possessed", and Elmira would have been another distant but necessary star for him to gaze at. He needed both.

When he was found in a gutter (Baltimore, Maryland now) in front of a polling station where someone had probably got him to vote under another name, he was wearing ill-fitting and shabby clothes. Mr Sinclair suggests that he may have hocked his own. He died next day in hospital, having arrived not drunk but drugged, according to the doctors there. Laudanum is mentioned only once by Poe several weeks earlier, and when he took it, he became sick; perhaps an attempt to suicide. If the doctors did not know of suspect that he was di-

abetic, and there is no evidence that a doctor ever did suspect it, then they probably would have thought of him as being drugged. I visited the Poes' Fordham cottage when I was thirteen, and I was much impressed by its smallness, its low ceilings by Poe's handwriting in one of his notebooks there in a glass case, and by a sketch of Virginia lying in bed with the cat Catherine, said to have been tortoiseshell, asleep on top of the covers next to her. An essential source of warmth, I also remember, with respect that Poe often walked from this cottage over the Bronx River bridge and all the way down the hazy way to Broadway to deliver some of his manuscripts which he had probably been working on all the way hours, because he couldn't afford a tram, much less a horse carriage. Mr Sinclair's book has an index, a list of Poe's publications during his time and its present, and a formidable account of its career. It is a book that every word of it book and loved it.

FICTION

Fits of the horrors

By J. I. M. Stewart

MICHAEL HAYES (Editor):
The Fantastic Tales of Fitz-James O'Brien
149pp. Calder. £4.95.
K. F. DILLON (Editor):
The Collected Ghost Stories of Mrs J. H. Riddell
345pp. Dover. £3.60.

Fitz-James O'Brien was born in 1828 in County Cork, inherited a small fortune upon coming of age, squandered it agreeably with the surrounding good society in London, and in 1851 emigrated to America. He joined the Union Army when the Civil War broke out, was wounded in 1862, and died while enjoying a glass of sherry with the surgeon attending him. Since boyhood he had aspired to be a writer, and throughout his career he tried his hand miscellaneous in poetry, plays, stories, essays, satires, criticism, and journalism. Michael Hayes, who has brought together seven of his stories of the supernatural, makes the modest claim that it is by the best three of them that he deserves to be remembered.

O'Brien, it seems, has been called "a Celtic Poe", and for Poe's work he owned himself as having the highest admiration. That may also be true, but Hayes, who has brought together seven of his stories of the supernatural, makes the modest claim that it is by the best three of them that he deserves to be remembered.

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Down the fairway

By Richard Osborne

DONALD McDUGALL:
Dave
200pp. Macmillan. £3.95.

Do you remember 1925, when Dave (Crombie won the British Open golf tournament) and the American stock market crashed? If not, this novel of championship golf will show you how it was. In a very pleasant, happy-making, old-fashioned way, Donald McDougall gives you young Dave Crombie for the first time. Dave is the son of the Carmichael family, who are the local club-makers. He is called Dave, and his father is called Mr. Crombie. Dave is a young man, and his father is a club-maker. Dave is a young man, and his father is a club-maker. Dave is a young man, and his father is a club-maker.

(perhaps a shade predictably) upon their creator. Her Hippie gives a shriek like that which a horse utters when he finds himself fettered and surrounded by fire. And that is the end of him and all his works. This is a bare résumé. Subsidiary horrors abound.

"The Diamond Lens" is a rather better story. A devoted amateur microscopist named Linley learns just such a story. Linley promptly murders this neighbour, steals the diamond and constructs a microscope of hitherto unheard of power. What it eventually reveals within a drop of water is an exquisitely beautiful woman, Linley names her Antimula and falls wildly in love with her. But the water eventually evaporates, and Antimula with it. So Linley goes mad.

There is a grain of imagination in this story but small power to make much of it, as a comparison with Kipling's "The Eye of Allah" will reveal. And the last of these three best stories, "What Was It?" is in like case. It begins, as innumerable ghost stories do, with the taking over of a haunted house by a new tenant, in this instance a man who has been discovering the pleasures of opium. When lying in bed after entertaining himself with Goudon's *History of Monsters* ("a curious French work"), he finds that he is suddenly in the clutches of an invisible being. He overcomes and binds it, and he and a friend discover that what they have thus rendered helpless is a human form. It is plainly dangerous; and is simply left to die, then buried in the garden.

"It was a strange funeral", we are told, "the dropping of that viewless corpse into the damp hole." Mr Hayes believes that this story acted as a model for Wells's *The Invisible Man*, and before that, Maupassant's "The Tale of the Man in the Moon". O'Brien's books, and Maupassant's is distinguished from both by having behind it the urgency of a creative mind beginning to be beset by actual hallucination.

Mrs J. H. Riddell, who died in 1906 at the age of seventy-four, was of that tribe of Victorian gentlewomen who were gallantly supported themselves and others by their pen and unsatisfactory domestic circumstances. Her true home was perhaps for realistic fiction of an unassuming sort, and her first success was with *George Keith of Fife Court*, a novel seeking to evoke the romance of commercial life in the City of London. But she wrote much for magazines—of which particu-

larly at Christmas) tales of the supernatural were a staple resource.

She became a pertacious producer of these, and developed considerable art in effectively surrounding her uncanny episodes with much of the humdrum of common life, careful character-drawing on conventional lines, and well observed and executed backgrounds in both town and country. Her ghosts may cause disturbances and even appear as a poltergeist sort, and be extremely terrifying (although not to us) as well. But they are blamelessly motivated on the whole, and the issue of their endeavours is commonly the detection of a crime or the discovery of a missing will or the formation of a romantic attachment. The readers of the "Christmas numbers" in those days so prominent on the bookshelves clearly loved them. But Mammillius, who believed that a sad tale's best for winter (and had one of his own about sprites and goblins), would not have made much of the present collection. Most of them have happy endings and not a few of them are a little dull.

Last of the lost

By Eric Homberger

ROBERT MCALMON:
A Hasty Bunch
299pp. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. \$6.95.

ROBERT E. KNOLL:
McAlmon and the Lost Generation
312pp. University of Nebraska Press. £2.00.

McAlmon fits through the memoirs of the 1920s: an unsmiling, wealthy, hard-drinking American who married the writer Winifred Broder, and is best remembered for the books issued by his Contact Publishing Company. He was the youngest of ten children of an itinerant Presbyterian minister. He grew up in the upper middle-class community in the University of Minnesota, served in the fledgling Army Air Force during the First World War, and spent an unproductive year at the University of Southern California, before taking off for Greenwich Village, and the expatriate American community in Paris. With his father-in-law's money, McAlmon became a prominent figure in Paris. He was Joyce's drinking partner and typist, and travelled with him to London, and travelled with him to London, and travelled with him to London.

He was also a writer. *A Hasty Bunch*, a collection of twenty-three short stories and sketches, the most of *Dubliners*, is a photographic reprint of a volume McAlmon published in 1923. R. E. Knoll's *McAlmon and the Lost Generation* returns to print a biographical anthology and commentary first published in 1952. Knoll's memoirs of McAlmon in 1952 struck up some interest in a forgotten figure. But the biography by Sanford Smoller in 1975 is perhaps more than warranted. McAlmon's stories are minor examples of a revolt from the village literature, about which Pound's in *Durance* and Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) said all that needed to be said—and a great deal more. Whatever the case, McAlmon displayed as a friend, lover, patron, drinker and publisher, there was little left over when he set down to write his own stories. McAlmon may be the least talented of the Lost Generation, but he was a writer.

But then why should critics, intellectual and emotional (narrativity, weak plotting, puns, characterisation, and a flat prose style stand in the way of this slice of "lost American fiction" being found and appreciated? As Haydn Jones is the *McAlmon and the Lost Generation*, the series edited by Matthew J. Bruccoli. He explains in a note that the basis for selection lay in frankly subjective and impressionistic principles. "I am not sure that the series is a very good one," he writes, "but it is a very good one."

Letters to W. B. Yeats, Volumes I & II

Edited by Richard J. Finerman, George Mills Harper and William M. Murphy, with the assistance of Alan B. Finerman. An edited selection of more than three hundred letters, mostly unpublished, written to Yeats by a wide range of his closest friends and associates, including his family, George Russell (AE), Lady Gregory, J. M. Synge, and John Quinn. £10.00 each volume.

The Correspondence of Robert Bridges and W. B. Yeats

Edited by Richard J. Finerman. Included in this collection are 27 letters from Bridges, most of them previously unpublished, and 15 from Yeats, two of them published here for the first time. The book is illustrated and has a full index. £6.95.

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Edited by Don Patinkin and J. Clark Lelish. £8.95. All prices quoted are U.K. prices. For further details please write to Raymond David (R.D.S.) The Macmillan Press Ltd, Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF.

MACMILLAN PRESS

The culture of totalitarianism

By Baruch Knei-Paz

GEORGE L. MOSSE:

The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich 252pp. New York: Howard Fertig, 514.

ROBERT A. NYE:

The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic 225pp. Sage Publications, £5.

George L. Mosse's latest book continues a scholarly preoccupation which began in a work of nearly twenty years ago, *The Holy Pagan*, where he attempted to trace the interaction of the nineteenth century between Christian theology and the secular interests of state and politics. In the process, he also argued, the pristine purity of Christian values was inevitably tarnished; but more significant from the point of view of subsequent political history was the consequence, as he saw it, that realpolitik came to absorb and partly rest upon certain spiritual pretensions which were the more cynically potent for being now outside their natural religious domain.

This theme Professor Mosse may be said to have later pursued, though in a different and more extreme historical context, in the best-known of his works, *The Crisis of German Ideology*. In this book, he showed how pagan, Christian and Germanic religious beliefs merged with longings for political salvation to issue forth in what he described as the intellectual origins of the Third Reich. In the ideology itself, the religious, of the National Socialist movement and regime. In arguing this thesis, Professor Mosse documented the manner in which Volkish thought, resurrected in the nineteenth-century romanticist revolt against, on the one hand, revolutionary disorders in Europe and, on the other, the dehumanizing, disorienting encroachments of industrialization, came to permeate, in his view, German culture in general and German intellectual life in particular. Flowing from thence to the sphere of politics, *The Crisis of German Ideology* was thus in part an analysis of various German social thinkers and in part a history of the spread of their ideas.

The Nationalization of the Masses, which takes its title from a passage in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, advances this line of inquiry, and its thesis, a logical step further, into areas hitherto barely explored, the more surprising, as since, on Professor Mosse's showing, they constitute so obviously fertile a ground for cultural history. Here Professor Mosse, with the period of the Napoleonic Wars as his starting-point, traces from the social to the political the manner in which German politics, from the realm of socio-political thought to that of artistic ideas and predilections—both among intellectual groups and the general populace. The result is an original and fascinating study of elitist and popular taste—in art, in music, in theatre, literature, architecture, and even public monuments—culminating in a synthesis of what may be called the "national aesthetic" of Germany at the time of Hitler's rise to power. In fact, a penultimate chapter brings the whole together in "Hitler's taste", which is shown to reflect and express popular aesthetic sensibilities as they evolved from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The book is based on a wide range of sources, some seldom delved into by historians of the period (and in part, incidentally, on private correspondence with Albert Speer, Hitler's "favourite architect").

As in the previous work, Professor Mosse may be faulted for presenting too monolithic or homogeneous a picture by excluding from his account of thought and behaviour which remained at odds with it. But he can reply, justly, that his concern in this as in the earlier book is with what he takes to be the major influence upon the culture of a nation, not with the numerous influences which were more restricted in their impact. Moreover, it is this major influence which he sees as having played a

ministering role in the triumph of National Socialism.

Certainly, in portraying the ubiquitous German national aesthetic, there is no glossing the array of evidence which he has unearthed and connected—from the theories of beauty of a Winckelmann or a Schiller to the ideals of rhythmic movement of gymnastic associations, from the conception of the *Mythos* in Wagner to the recurring mystical themes in productions at public festivals, popular theatres and choral societies. He shows all these, and others, to be motivated by shared spiritual values, which, in turn, motivated the various movements, movements, music academies, religious institutions, and numerous other associations, are also shown by Professor Mosse to have attracted and involved multitudes of ordinary Germans in a kind of national ritual, sharing and giving vent to a common aesthetic experience. Professor Mosse does not tell us, and it is probably impossible to know, how widespread, in terms of numbers, this experience actually was; but he believes it to have been so pervasive as to have affected, in one way or another, even those who remained at its fringes.

The experience, he argues, was first and foremost a religious one, or rather, an attempt to recapture in a secular-spiritual artistic guise, a religiosity undermined by eighteenth-century European doctrines and by the emerging industrial world of the nineteenth century. It drew on pagan, mythical and folkloric motifs, because these were the ancient heritage of Germanic culture and religion. However, they were also conceived to be the very sources which could provide a defence against the materialism and the disruptive nationalist ideology bequeathed by the Enlightenment, which rejected the values of traditional ties and customs, and, then, of the newly proclaimed, so-called "inexorable forces of history" working their service out and wrecking havoc through political revolution, social upheaval, and economic transformation. In a world thus grown complex and disoriented, the individual, ever more isolated, was losing all sense of history, of continuity, and of identity. The turn to, and restoration of, the old primordial religiosity were thus a response to the dehumanizing and alienating impact of modernity. Not fortuitously did they eventually converge with a "rubbish nationalism" since the longing for the certainties of religious experience was part also of a desire to reconstruct the lost sense and reality of community. In the context of the exigencies of twentieth-century politics, this community was ultimately to be restructured through a combination of statist ritual and ideology and modern instruments and techniques.

This thesis concerning the "German spiritual crisis" will be familiar to those who know of the author's *Crisis of German Ideology*. Indeed, some of Professor Mosse's own previous writings. What is new in *The Nationalization of the Masses* is the analysis, in the context and in support of this thesis, of what were essentially non-political activities—athletics, festivals, theatrical productions, and so on—as a form of expression of the popular longings for continuity, fraternity, and harmony. Professor Mosse argues that such activities, utilizing the language and forms borrowed from religious liturgy and worship, spilled over and fused with the realm of political life itself. When the debacle of Weimar struck, Hitler himself a child of the "German aesthetic", came there to collect its symbols, myths, and cults into a "comprehensive ideology and national liturgy, a new political style." In Professor Mosse's words, and to translate them into political, economic and cultural terms: "Thus were the passions of the national aesthetic channelled into an organized national enterprise. One would have expected there to be a contradiction between art and politics, between the vagaries of the aesthetic expression and the demands of order and discipline. But, as Professor Mosse shows in his analysis, the national aesthetic subsumed the beautiful and the functional, the passionate and the restrained, the mystical and the realistic under a consistent view of ordered, formalized creativity. Similarly, the ideal

work of art was conceived as giving expression both to the individual soul and to that of the community. And cultural activity had as its aim mass participation in the reuniting of the two.

Here lies the main thrust of Professor Mosse's book: although he is describing a cultural phenomenon, the actual object of his inquiries is a political one, namely, the place of popular participation and support in the making of modern totalitarianism. Incongruous though it may still seem, the advent of National Socialism, while it enslaved the German nation, simultaneously signalled the triumph of mass democratization, albeit of a type run wild. We are so taken aback by Hitler's attacks on democratic institutions that we sometimes forget the popular sources of his power (a brilliant recent work by J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, like Professor Mosse's book, reminded us of this). To understand why National Socialism was not the antithesis of one concept of democracy, but rather its logical product, we must see that it arose within the framework of the popular sources of his power (a brilliant recent work by J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, like Professor Mosse's book, reminded us of this). To understand why National Socialism was not the antithesis of one concept of democracy, but rather its logical product, we must see that it arose within the framework of the popular sources of his power (a brilliant recent work by J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, like Professor Mosse's book, reminded us of this).

Whatsoever the social and economic sources of the development, in Europe generally, of mass politics—be it in the form of a counter-revolution, from Marxism to Weberian sociology and their offshoots, are in one way or another attempts at explaining its origins—it represented a process of democratization, in the simple sense of providing an outlet for the masses, and participation for greater numbers of people. Clearly this is what was always meant by the notion of the "rise of the masses", the emergence of the "common man". Even so important as this phenomenon, it is of the right, when it ultimately proved more adept at exploiting it. That it had little to do, however, with the traditional Anglo-American concept of democracy, that it eventually expressed a morbid hostility to parliamentary government, representation, legal and constitutional restraints and to all that came entailed in practice—a plurality of political parties and ideologies—goes almost without saying. Though the Anglo-American tradition itself grew out of an extension of politics, its idea of democracy, made possible by earlier, more gradually evolving, and thus different historical conditions, was an institutional one. The new politics, by contrast, were firmly rooted, as Professor Mosse

demonstrates, in the burgeoning nineteenth-century idea of an unmediated popular sovereignty, in the growth of nationalism, and in the impact of late industrialization. Thus was the traditional concept of democracy bedevilled by history's ingenuity for transforming its forms, if not its popular sources.

As Professor Mosse would be the first to admit, the theory of mass society and of mass democracy is now of long standing; it has been argued in the works of J. L. Talmon, Hannah Arendt and William Kornhauser, to mention only the best-known. But Professor Mosse's concern in his book is not so much to repeat the theory in the abstract as to demonstrate the concrete, day-to-day manner in which it may be said to have revealed itself in the cultural history of one European nation, Germany, and how this history became embedded in the most catastrophic regime of our times. Nothing is easier than to expose the evils, the absurdities and the grotesque nonsense of this regime. However, by concentrating instead on certain of its roots, the cultural—more precisely aesthetic—residue on which it rested, a residue which rose to the surface not only through political manipulation but by way of a voluntary spontaneous, and frenzied reaction to modern woes, Professor Mosse also illuminates the curious relationship between, on the one hand, the longing for community, identity and participation, and, on the other, the final self-subjugation and total commitment to Hitler and National Socialism. Mass democracy and mass enslavement, it emerges, were not incongruous.

This does not, of course, explain the whole story; Professor Mosse's approach, like that of intellectual or cultural history in general, would not be confused, as he himself says, with a search for the "causes" of the Third Reich or the "causes" of the triumph of National Socialism. For that we need, and have, other explanations as well. But the history of mass culture does help us understand why modern totalitarianism has been able simultaneously to rest upon, exploit, and dominate the well-springs of popular support and why, moreover, the paradox of this did not become apparent, at least at the level of mass cognition, until too late.

If the rise of the masses ultimately ended in a new vassalage, their initial "revolt" against the turn of the age aroused in some observers of the phenomenon an afflicted fear of permanent mobility. One such observer, Ortega y Gasset, has already been mentioned and his alarmed response is a classic of its kind. Another, the French social psychologist—he was by training a doctor of medicine—Gustave Le Bon, has been much neglected until recently. This neglect is surprising. Le Bon wrote prodigiously during a long lifetime (he died in 1931, at the age of ninety-one). Though his work is uneven, and much of it is sheer vulgarization of the prevalent scientific ideas of his time, he is also the author of one of the earliest and best accounts of crowd behaviour, the *Psychologie des Foules* (first published in 1895), and of a number of other, sometimes brilliant, works on related subjects. More-

over, he was widely read by political leaders and his insights influenced French politicians, Mussolini, and, it seems, Hitler. No one would claim that he carried out his studies with scientific rigour, but Freud, in his *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, acknowledged Le Bon's "brilliant, excited portrayal of the group mind" and his contribution, in general, to the understanding of collective behaviour. Yet not even the French have produced a full-length study of his work.

However, we now have Robert Nye's excellent monograph, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology*, which not only analyses Le Bon's work but looks at it and the man within the context of the political and intellectual upheavals during the Third Republic. Anyone who believes in Germany's intellectual respect for mass democracy was unique would do well to read Nye's account of this field top to bottom. Of course, this field top to bottom is not so much a history as a study and the thought of one man so well integrated into the milieu of his day.

Le Bon was scoffed at by the French academic establishment as given the absurdity of some of his political notions, or most see him as a thoroughgoing reactionary. He espoused views on race, heredity, and national character which would have warmed the heart of Hitler. He was at one and the same time obsessed, fascinated by crowd behaviour and by the social changes he witnessed, and he offered his intellectual services to democratic politicians as well. In fact, however, his thought can be seen as a bridge between nineteenth-century conservatism and twentieth-century fascism. As Dr Nye shows, this was in keeping with the climate of his time and place.

Le Bon was an eclectic borrower but he had the simplification talent for the creative synthesis of ideas. He stressed that a crowd was not simply the sum of its parts, but a new entity, a new mind, and together were transformed into an active organic combination. In the process a "collective mind" was created, unstable, erratic, and largely governed by unconscious forces—instincts and emotions, rather than by reason. The crowd, he believed, had a feminine nature, responding spontaneously to emotional, instinctive stimuli, secretly longing to submit to strong authority. He spoke of the hypnotic, hallucinatory state of "crowd" members, "joining" one another and subject to mutual "contagion", and the whole easily vulnerable to external suggestions, simply but frequently repeated by the demagogic-hypnotist. The crowd, he said, was a "collective mind" which was not a collection of individuals, but a new entity, a new mind, and together were transformed into an active organic combination. 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Turning a deaf ear to the orchestra

By C. M. Woodhouse

LEOPOLD TREPPER:
The Great Game
The Story of the Red Orchestra
422pp. Michael Joseph. £6.95.

All the major combatants had excellent sources of intelligence at one time or another during the Second World War, and in some cases throughout. The torrent of post-war literature on espionage has made this fact very clear. The British had Ultra, the Americans had Purple, the Germans had Cicero, the Russians had Sorge and the Red Orchestra. At first sight one is inclined to wonder why in that case anyone was beaten, but at second and third glance the reasons are obvious.

Intelligence could not replace armed strength. British could not profit from Ultra in Greece in 1941 because they had not the physical resources to oppose to the Germans, although they knew the complete enemy order of battle from day to day. The Germans could not profit from Cicero in 1944 because they had not the physical resources to oppose to the Russians, although they knew the complete enemy order of battle from day to day. The Germans could not profit from Cicero in 1944 because they had not the physical resources to oppose to the Russians, although they knew the complete enemy order of battle from day to day.

There was also another reason. The Western allies put their intelligence to practical use; Hitler and Stalin seldom did so. After the tragic lapse at Pearl Harbor, the Americans made good use of their success in breaking the Japanese codes; so did the British with the German codes. But Stalin seems to have ignored most of the intelligence available to him, even when it came from impeccably communist sources. As for the Nazis, the only use to which Cicero's intelligence was put was to fuel the internal feuds of the party bosses, some of whom continued to regard it as deception material even after it had correctly forecast the American ride on Florel.

Among all the successes of wartime intelligence, none has earned a more eminent reputation than the Red Orchestra (so named by the Germans), which was established and led by Leopold Trepper. Yet again very nearly the same rule applies. Only for a short time was the intelligence supplied by his network actually put to practical use by the Soviet high command. Like many others, his sources forewarned Stalin of the impending German attack in June 1941 and like many others, they were ignored because Stalin knew better.

Then for a time the Soviet high command, if not Stalin himself, learnt to treat intelligence with more respect. But for more than half the duration of the war, the Red Orchestra was involved in nothing more than a sophisticated game of mutual deception between intelligence and counter-intelligence services.

Leopold Trepper is very frank about the extent and limitations of what he achieved. He claims a number of successes arising directly from some fifteen hundred dispatches sent to the "Center" in the Soviet capital between 1940 and 1943. He lists some half-dozen especially significant items: the early details of the new German Tiger tank; the scale of losses of the Messerschmitt fighter aircraft relative to the rate of production in late 1941; the plans for a new Messerschmitt; the exact strength of the Luftwaffe on the Eastern front at the end of 1941; Hitler's intention, to launch a new offensive against Moscow in the winter of 1941-42; the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the German contingency plans at the end of 1942; and the forecasts made of the likely duration of the war in the higher levels of the Wehrmacht at various dates.

All these items were of real importance, though in only two cases does Mr. Trepper claim that effective action was based on them by the Soviet high command. He is under no delusion that the intelligence of the Red Orchestra or of any other first-class source (such as Richard Sorge in Tokyo) played a decisive part in winning the war. "Who was it who defeated the Axis?" he asks, and gives his own answer.

It was the Russian footsolder with his feet frozen in the snows of Stalingrad, the American marine with his nose in the rear sands of Omaha beach; the Yugoslavian or Greek partisan fighting in his mountains. The answer is generous, and at least doubtful in the case of the partisans. But it is honest, and

Bravest of the brave

By Brian Montgomery

SIR JOHN SHYTH:
Great Stories of the Victoria Cross
228pp. Arthur Barker. £4.95.

The author of this book, himself a VC, has drawn together thirty-two vignettes of men who have won the Victoria Cross, with a brief record of their deeds. All VCs are equal and Sir John emphasizes that his characters have been taken across the board of the century and across the life of the Victoria Cross. Blended with this pattern of incredible gallantry and courage are some interesting facts about the award and its history that are probably not generally known.

Queen Victoria instituted the VC on January 29, 1856, "for special

much more convincing than the exaggerated testimonials quoted from British, French and other sources after the war. These may be excused, however, on the ground that they were designed to help secure Mr. Trepper's release from communist hands long after the Red Orchestra was silent.

The need to secure his release after the war points to the macabre absurdity which lies at the heart of Mr. Trepper's book, and indeed occupies more than half of it. His active role as a super-spy lasted only from the beginning of the war to the last week of November 1942. It would be even shorter if one adopted the communist convention of dating the beginning of the war from June 22, 1941. The whole of the rest of the time covered by his autobiography, amounting to more than thirty years—apart from his youthful apprenticeship in Poland, Palestine, France and Moscow before the war—was spent almost entirely fruitlessly at the mercy of the paranoid forces of the Gestapo, the NKVD, and the Polish secret police. His story in fact has as its sub-plot a series of experiences which confirm and exceed the most gruesome imaginations of the writers of spy-fiction.

From November 1942, when he was caught by the Gestapo, his story is just as exciting as before, if not more so. But it is also less interesting because it is completely pointless. No blame for this rests with Mr. Trepper. He was the victim for more than two years of a Gestapo plot designed to convince the Soviet authorities, first, that the Red Orchestra was still free and active, and second, that the Germans were contemplating a separate peace with the Soviet Union. By an extremely courageous and ingenious ruse, Mr. Trepper

individual acts of bravery by members of the armed forces; later she made it retrospective to 1854, to cover the Crimea War, stating that the VC was then "the new decoration should be highly valued and eagerly sought after." So far there have been 1,351 awards of the VC, including three double VCs, while today there are 117 living holders.

Generally the VC is a young man's award but Sir John points out a number of exceptions. The oldest ever to be given, the decoration was awarded to Captain William Reynor, a member of the Bengal Army's Victoria Establishment, who won it at Delhi on the first day of the Indian Mutiny; he was then thirty-nine. The youngest recipient was Hospital Apprentice Fitzgibbon of the Indian Medical Service, who fought in the Third China War when he was fifteen, and Boy Cornwell RN who won his

succeeded in passing a message, while he was actually a prisoner of the Gestapo, to warn the Soviet "Center" that all current messages from his network were fabricated by the Germans. After ten months under arrest he escaped in September 1943. He spent the rest of the war on the run, never far from recapture but able to resume communication with Moscow through Communist Party channels.

Meanwhile the Russians, knowing that they were receiving fabricated messages, entered zestfully into the Great Game, as the Gestapo called it. They pretended to believe that the Germans really wanted a separate peace and responded accordingly, though of course equally insincerely. Since neither side had any real intention of making peace, the Great Game amounted to nothing more than an elaborate deception on both sides, and produced nothing more than an insight into each other's psychology. For this insane pastime 128 of Mr. Trepper's colleagues, whose names are listed in an appendix, paid with their lives.

Worse was still to come. After the war some of the survivors, including Mr. Trepper, naturally converged on Moscow. Stalin thereupon had them arrested and tried (if that is not too grotesque a euphemism) for collaboration. But it was not collaboration, which he had experienced at first hand, that may have continued to belie after seeing Stalin at work, against the thought that communists were not all as he really did believe that Stalinism was a deviation when he contemplates Poland of Giersek and the Soviet Union of Brezhnev? It is the thought that his moving story does not tell us, but it would not be surprising if the answer is paradoxically yes.

Mr. Trepper remained in Soviet prisons till 1954. His only consolation was that at least five of his tormentors from the Gestapo was at one time in the same prison with him, though he is said now to

VC at Jutland, aged sixteen. Five padras, all chaplains in the army, and four civilians have also won the award. The author tells us that civilians have always been eligible for the VC during any time they have been attached to the armed forces; and since 1920 members of the women's Services, naval, military and air, including all nurses and hospital staffs, have been added to the list. It will be surprising to find that he counts some of those joining the illustrious band of persons entitled to write VC after their name.

Some unusual awards include those described by the author as "Three Father and Son VCs". The story of this famous trio was Lord Roberts, who, though he was an artilleryman, joined in a cavalry charge and saved the squadron commander's life, cut down two mutineers (it was 1858) and saved the squadron's standard. His son won the VC in the Boer War, Captain Congreve in South Africa in 1899 and his son Major Congreve in France in 1916 were both VCs. Lastly Major Gough during the Indian Mutiny and his son (also Major Gough) in Somaliland, each of the coveted decoration. Interest- ing is the fact that where there has been conspicuous bravery by a body of sailors, soldiers or airmen, the Victoria Cross can be awarded to one or more of their number for the honour. This happened more than once in India, and in 1917 two VCs were awarded to a ship, HMS Paragon, whose ship's company, acting as Landing Force, landed on the island of Sumatra. 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